

RECEIVED

July 6, 2007

Mr. Chuck Oliver
District Ranger
Bitterroot National Forest
P.O. Box 388
Darby, MT 59839

JUL 10 2007

Ravalli County Commissioners

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Dear Mr. Oliver,

I am writing to comment on the proposal to re-open the rock quarry in Lost Horse Canyon. I am a frequent user of this canyon and am concerned about many of the repercussions the re-opening of this quarry will have.

First, an operational quarry will affect the enjoyment of the dispersed camping site along Lost Horse Creek. I frequent this Canyon at least a dozen times a year. I have camped at this area many times during the week, the weekend, and in the winter months. Every time I have camped here, I have also seen other users. An operational quarry will effectively ruin the peaceful nature of that place and will discourage people from camping here. Because this place is fairly impacted, some may think this is a good thing, but if camping is discouraged here, it will promote camping in new areas near the creek. This will affect areas that have not yet been compromised and will promote erosion and will reduce the water quality in this drainage. This may be exacerbated by the renewed use of old two track roads near the creek and may promote more off road vehicle use in an area that is already severely affected by OHV use.

Secondly, an operational quarry will affect the enjoyment of rock climbing in the canyon. The access trail to the climbing area will be affected, and if the quarry extends uphill to the climbing site, the climbing itself will be effectively destroyed. This is because the blasting will undermine the stability of the rock faces and will make them dangerous to climb. This concerns me for two reasons, the most obvious being that this fine climbing area will not longer exist. Having climbed in places all over the west, as well as all over Montana, I know that the climbing above the proposed quarry at Lost Horse Canyon is some of the best climbing Montana has to offer. The variety of types of climbing, length of climbs, and difficulty of climbs is unmatched anywhere else in the Bitterroot Valley. My second concern is that a quarry here will result in injuries to my fellow climbers by making the access trail and the climbing itself unstable and dangerous.

Third, as an avid user of this canyon, I know a quarry here will negatively affect other activities such as horseback riding, hiking, and sight seeing.

Fourth, all of the potential repercussions of reopening the quarry will undoubtedly affect the wildlife in the area, from cliff-dwelling birds, to mammals, to plants, to fish and amphibian species from erosion into the watershed. I have seen raptors on the cliffs at the rock climbing area, and although the proposed action of this quarry is under a

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1. Содержание и структура текста.

[illegible][illegible]

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

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DISCUSSION

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categorical exclusion, I encourage that a full environmental assessment of the effects of this quarry be carried out before proceeding any further.

Given all of these concerns, I strongly recommend looking to other places to initiate a quarry operation. It seems to me there are many suitable places upriver and in other drainages that have less recreational use and would result in less environmental (and possibly human) damage.

Thank you for considering my comments on this. Please keep me informed of the developments on this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathy Marieb', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Kathy Marieb
P.O. Box 8826
Missoula, MT 59807